

Muhammad Amin Khan Khoso

Among the blessings that Nature has bestowed upon humans, one is that humankind has been gifted with both the blessings of **memory** and **forgetfulness**.

If a person did not possess memory, their survival would become extremely difficult (a living hell). Similarly, if they were not blessed with the gift of forgetfulness, their life would still be filled with poison, because they would never be able to forget their pains, hardships, and sorrows. They would be tormented by grief all the time.

As a poet once said:

"O Lord, the memory of the past is a torment; Take away my memory."

When Muhammad Amin Khan departed from this world, I was overwhelmed with grief for days.

Memories of him kept rushing back, and the stream of tears from my eyes just would not stop.

My meeting with him had also happened in a peculiar way. I had gone to Lahore for some work related to the Sindhi Adabi Board and was staying at the "Lahore Hotel." It was around dusk. I had just returned after finishing my work in the city when I saw a man standing at the entrance of the

hotel. He was wearing a long, traditional-cut shalwar, a shirt, a waistcoat, and traditional-style footwear. He was of a slender build, tall, and appeared to be around sixty years old. His flowing white beard reached down to his belly. He was speaking to another person in Sindhi.

I stepped forward, extended my hand to shake his, and asked, "Are you, by any chance, Muhammad Amin Khan Khoso?"

"Yes, I am. But who are you?"

"I am Rabbani."

"How did you recognize me?"

"I have heard many stories about you from Pir Hussamuddin Rashdi and Shah Sahib G.M. Syed. You grabbed Gazdar's tie in the Sindh Assembly, didn't you?"

He burst into a hearty laugh.

"But we haven't met before, have we?"

"No" I replied.

"And you haven't seen my picture either?"

"No."

"Then you have done wonders by recognizing me."

"It is no wonder at all. I have heard that once Maulana Ubaidullah Sindhi was traveling to Lahore by train. Maulana Maududi thought that a massive crowd would gather to meet him at the Lahore station. Therefore, he went to a station prior to

wait for the train. When the train arrived, he asked the guard about Maulana Sindhi's carriage and stepped inside. As he entered, Maulana Sindhi greeted him, saying, 'Assalam-o-Alaikum, Maududi Sahib.' Hearing this, Maududi was astonished. Replying 'Walaikum Assalam,' he met Maulana Sindhi and asked, 'Respected sir, how did you recognize me?' Maulana Sindhi replied, 'I have read your articles. Upon seeing you, I intuitively felt that you must be that very person.'

"But I am a follower of Maulana Sindhi."

"Me too," I replied.

"Then from this day forward, you are my friend."

From that day on, a deep friendship blossomed between me and Muhammad Amin Khan Khoso. It was a companionship so profound that he once wrote to me in a letter:

"Today, as I remembered you, tears welled up and flowed from my eyes. The rest, you know yourself."

Muhammad Amin Khan was a resident of the Thul region. However, he had a habit of visiting Karachi at least once a year, and Lahore or Rawalpindi once or twice, for a trip. It was partly for worldly business and partly for entertainment and leisure. In those days, I used to live in Hyderabad.

Consequently, as soon as Muhammad Amin Khan

arrived in Karachi, I would receive a telegram saying, "Come immediately."

He always used to stay in a hotel and would rent a taxi for the entire day on a daily basis. Then, whether he went anywhere or not, it didn't matter—the car would remain parked at the hotel entrance all day long. His hotel room would be air-conditioned, and he would try to get one in a quiet corner. He would keep fresh and dry fruits beautifully arranged in plates on the room's table. Firstly, looking at them brought delight to the eyes, and secondly, it filled the entire room with a natural fragrance.

In Karachi, during those days, he used to stay at the "National City" Hotel. The room had two beds—one for him and the other for me. We would spend the entire time talking about the old days.

Otherwise, Muhammad Amin Khan loved Shah Sahib, G.M. Syed, Pir Hussamuddin Rashdi, and Shaikh Abdul Majid Sindhi, but his true, passionate love was reserved for a select few: one was Maulana Ubaidullah Sindhi, and the other was Khan Bahadur Shaheed Allah Bux Soomro.

Once, Maulana Sindhi had said to him, "Our Khan will lead the prayers today." Muhammad Amin Khan repeated this "certificate" of appreciation to me a thousand times over and over.

One day, when I went to see him, I found him sitting there highly irritated. He said, "Why don't you talk some sense into him?" I asked, "Into whom?" He replied, "Into Maulana Qasmi." I asked, "Is everything alright? What happened?"

He said, "Today I went to see him, and he started boasting about his own love for Maulana Sindhi. Good heavens! Someone should have asked him: 'My dear sir, Maulana Sindhi is mine, and I belong to Maulana Sindhi. I am still alive and kicking. Who are you to claim a share in Maulana Sindhi's affection?'"

It was with great difficulty that I managed to calm him down.

Perhaps even his own children did not remember Khan Bahadur Shaheed Allah Bux Soomro as much as Muhammad Amin Khan did. He used to say, "The document of Sindh's future is written with the blood of Allah Bux. Until that is read, all other talk is useless."

Once, he took a relative of Khan Bahadur Allah Bux to the Deputy Commissioner of Sukkur to secure a job for him. The D.C. was a non-Sindhi and began to show reluctance and make excuses. Muhammad Amin Khan reprimanded him, saying: "Are you hesitating to give a job to the relative of the person

who provided livelihoods to hundreds of boys like you?!" The D.C. issued the order immediately. Muhammad Amin Khan used to bestow titles upon people. He gave Shah Sahib G.M. Syed the title of "Syed-e-Azam" (The Great Syed), Pir Hussamuddin Rashdi the title of "Dana-e-Raaz" (The Knower of Secrets), Maulana Qasmi the title of "Ilm Jo Samand" (The Ocean of Knowledge), and to me, he gave the title "Rabbani, My Leader." However, he gave Pir Ali Muhammad Rashdi a very difficult title. One day, when I went to see him, he was sitting there looking deeply perplexed and worried. I asked, "Is everything alright?" He said, "I called Rashdi. We fixed a time to meet. But he told me, 'Do not come empty-handed. Bring some offering (tribute/money) with you.'" I asked him, "But didn't you give him a very unfavorable title?" He replied, "That is a different matter. But sir, our relations are very old." When I met him in the evening, he told me that he had still gone and given him four thousand rupees as a tribute. Kudos to the late Rashdi Sahib, who, upon the death of Muhammad Amin Khan, wrote an extremely beautiful article in the "Jang" newspaper and remembered him with great affection.

Muhammad Amin Khan had also bestowed a title upon himself: "The Imam of Sindh-Worship" (The Leader of Devotion to Sindh). A non-Sindhi debated fiercely with him over this title, but he refused to change it.

Love for Sindh was deeply embedded in his blood. Once, during the days of One Unit, he was in Lahore staying at the Lahore Hotel. He had secured an appointment to meet the Governor of One Unit. After growing tired of waiting in the secretary's office, he said to the secretary: "The lion has come to meet the mouse."

Hearing this, the secretary was stunned, went inside, and complained to the governor. The governor immediately called him in. Before Muhammad Amin Khan could even speak, the governor asked him, "How will the issue of Sindh be resolved?"

Muhammad Amin Khan replied, "Through G.M. Syed."

The governor asked, "And how will G.M. Syed agree?"

Muhammad Amin Khan said, "Through me."

The governor asked, "And how will you agree?"

Muhammad Amin Khan replied, "Make us partners in power."

The governor did not make him a partner in power, but he did waive the remaining dues on his land revenue (agricultural tax).

This is another incident from Lahore. Both he and I were staying at the Lahore Hotel. When I went to see him in the evening, a young man was sitting there. During our conversation, he asked me a question about One Unit. I gave him a sharp, blunt response.

He took it up and started debating. Then, the intellectual bashing I gave him is something he will remember for the rest of his life. The amusing part was that while Muhammad Amin Khan remained completely silent the whole time, he would occasionally interject in the middle of the debate, saying, "I am neither in favor of One Unit, nor against it."

Finally, the young man took his leave and said to me, "Tomorrow, I will bring my elder with me. You can debate with him."

After he left, Muhammad Amin Khan said to me: "(Oh wise one, you should have at least asked me first. You just jumped right into the debate like that.)"

"Why?" I asked him.

"That young man was from the CID (Criminal Investigation Department/Intelligence). I keep

doing various activities and movements here in the hotel, so he comes to keep an eye on me." I asked, "Why didn't you tell me beforehand?"

He replied, "I kept repeating over and over that I am neither in favor of One Unit nor against it, yet you still didn't get the hint!" Having said this, he burst into fits of laughter.

Once in Karachi, we both happened to be staying in the same hotel. He said, "Do not go anywhere tonight; I have invited Alana and his wife for dinner."

In the evening, the late Alana Sahib arrived with his wife. We had a wonderful gathering. In those days, he was writing a book on Quaid-e-Azam.

However, he had developed some differences with Miss Fatima Jinnah. He shared several anecdotes about Quaid-e-Azam's childhood. He told us, "When he (the Quaid) was born, his mother had made a solemn vow.

So, she went all the way from Karachi to the Kathiawar region, to his ancestral village of Gonri in Paneli State, to offer a ceremonial flag-raising at the shrine of a local saint. Out of a journey of several hundred miles, the lady traveled a hundred miles by boat and fifty miles by bullock cart. Who could have known that the tiny, innocent baby in

that lady's lap would grow up to divide the country of India into two parts?"

Even during the final days of Muhammad Amin Khan, it was Alana Sahib who remained close to him. I only found out about his condition when the yogis had already departed the land (meaning, when it was already too late).

Alana Sahib told me that due to a severe knee condition, he had brought him away from his village and admitted him to Uncle Sariya Hospital in Karachi. The doctors performed their routine procedures. They put him on glucose drips. Then, they started piercing him with needles—over and over again. When the poor man grew exhausted from enduring this torment, he seized an opportunity one day and escaped from the hospital. But the Angel of Death had already made the arrangements for his final departure.

Once, I insisted and pressured him to pen down his life story (autobiography). With great difficulty, he finally agreed to my request. However, he said, "Send someone to write it down for me." So, I sent Nashad, the deputy editor of the *Mehran* magazine, to him. Muhammad Amin Khan said to him: "Go back, young boy, I am a man of a lover's nature and a beloved's temperament."

With the death of Muhammad Amin Khan, a chapter in the history of Sindh came to a close. His connections were not limited to Sindh alone; they extended to Balochistan as well. The late Bhutto had put him forward to negotiate with the Baloch sardars (chiefs).

Muhammad Amin Khan was a pioneer and leader of the early peasant (Hari) and labor movements in Sindh. He was educated at Aligarh. As soon as he returned to Sindh, he raised the banner of nationalism against the British. Because of this, a murderous attack was made on him, in which he was severely injured. Since his time had not yet come, he survived.

Khan Bahadur Allah Bux Soomro shared a very deep and close bond of the heart with him.

Muhammad Amin Khan went to his grave carrying many important secrets of Sindh's history buried deep within his chest.

Once, after his death, while I was sitting in the office of the Adabi Board, his brother pulled up his car right at the office door. He said, "I was traveling from Karachi to Hyderabad when suddenly I heard Muhammad Amin Khan's voice saying: 'Go and meet Rabbani before you proceed.'"

I opened the window of my office room. There was nothing on the road except the blazing, scorching

sun. As I closed the window, I heard the echoing laughter of Muhammad Amin Khan saying, "Rabbani, my leader."

The memories of times gone by rushed back, and my eyes welled up with tears.